whole scheme. They preferred the old style offensive and they were still fretting about the brunt of the fighting and therefore the sacrifice being shifted from the British to the French Army, So thoroughly convinced was General Nivelle of this antagonism and of its being responsible for British tardiness, that he went to the extent of saying openly that the situation could not improve as long as Sir Douglas Haig remained in command of the British Army. This was conveyed to me indirectly. I promptly discouraged any such notion. But it shows something of the lack of sympathy between men on whose cordial and loyal co-operation so much depended.

We were not yet at the end of delays. This time the enemy was responsible. The enemy had decided to shorten their line in the Somme area. *German retreat* By doing so they gained three advantages. *to Hindenburg* The position was considerably stronger than the old. They were also able to defend the new line with fewer troops and thus add several divisions to the reserve army they were building up behind the line in preparation for the offensive which they knew the Allies were contemplating. And thirdly, they dislocated the whole of the elaborate plans made by the Allied Generals just as they were being brought up to starting point.

It is a reflexion on the French and British Staffs that the Germans were able to complete the

tremendous arrangements necessary for such a withdrawal without any apprehension of the move on the part of their opponents.

The constant postponements had given the Germans ample opportunity to construct the Hindenburg line